UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PUBLICATIONS
IN
AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY AND ETHNOLOGY

Vol. 12, No. 11, pp. 443-465, plate 7 July 11, 1917

POMO BEAR DOCTORS

BY
S. A. BARRETT

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS
BERKELEY

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PUBLICATIONS
IN
AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY AND ETHNOLOGY

Vol. 12, No. 11, pp. 443-465, plate 7July 11, 1917

POMO BEAR DOCTORS

BY
S. A. BARRETT

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS
BERKELEY

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PUBLICATIONS DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

The following publications dealing with archaeological and ethnological subjects issued under the direction of the Department of Anthropology are sent in exchange for the publications of anthropological departments and museums, and for journals devoted to general anthropology or to archaeology and ethnology. They are for sale at the prices stated. Exchanges should be directed to The Exchange Department, University Library, Berkeley, California, U. S. A. All orders and remittances should be addressed to the University of California Press.

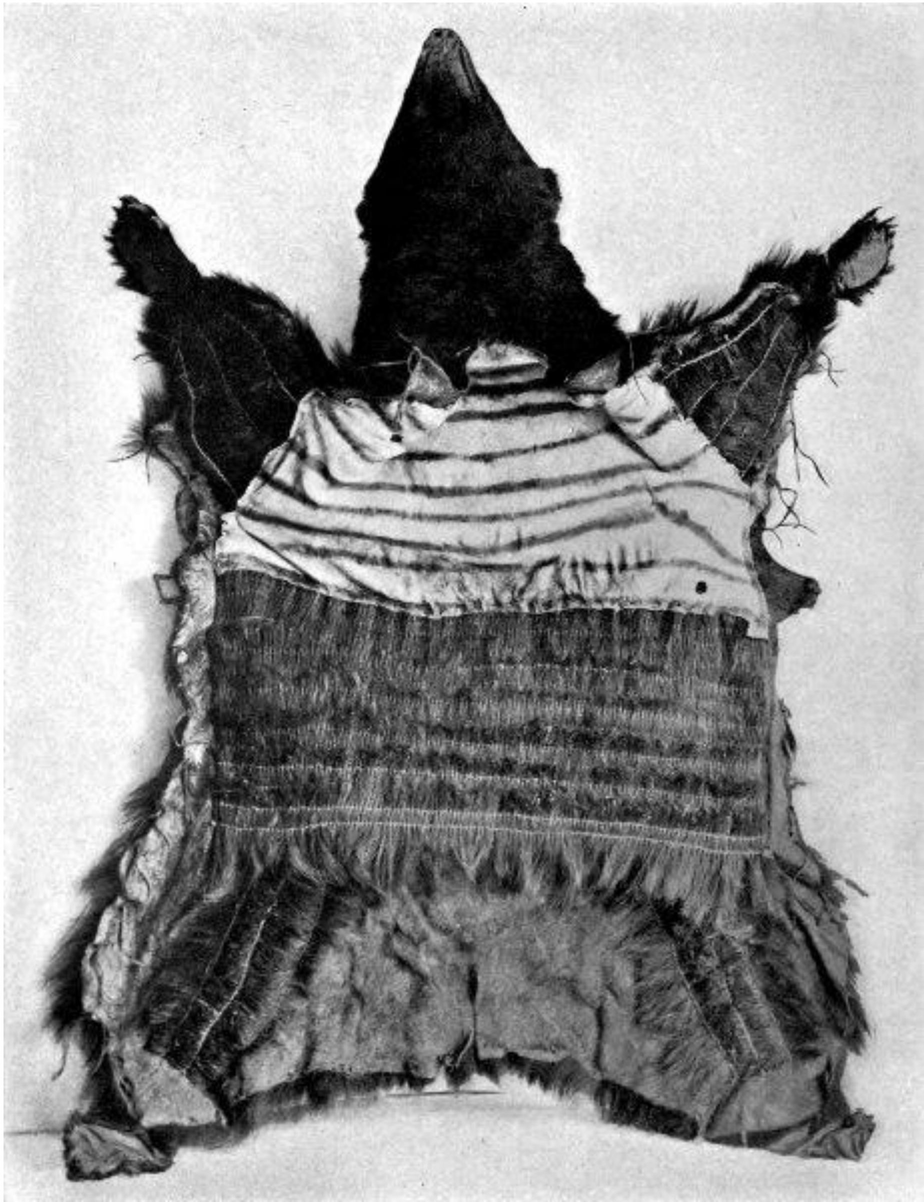
European agent for the series in American Archaeology and Ethnology, Classical Philology, Education, Modern Philology, Philosophy, and Semitic Philology, Otto Harrassowitz, Leipzig. For the series in Botany, Geology, Pathology, Physiology, Zoology and also American Archaeology and Ethnology, R. Friedlaender & Sohn, Berlin.

AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY AND ETHNOLOGY.—A. L. Kroeber, Editor. Prices, Volume 1, $4.25; Volumes 2 to 11, inclusive, $3.50 each; Volume 12 and following $5.00 each.

	Cited as Univ. Calif. Publ. Am. Arch. Ethn.	Price
Vol. 1.	1. Life and Culture of the Hupa, by Pliny Earle Goddard. Pp. 1-88; plates 1-30. September, 1903	$1.25
	2. Hupa Texts, by Pliny Earle Goddard. Pp. 89-368. March, 1904	3.00
	Index, pp. 369-378.	
Vol. 2.	1. The Exploration of the Potter Creek Cave, by William J. Sinclair. Pp. 1-27; plates 1-14. April, 1904	.40
	2. The Languages of the Coast of California South of San Francisco, by A. L. Kroeber. Pp. 29-80, with a map. June, 1904	.60
	3. Types of Indian Culture in California, by A. L. Kroeber. Pp. 81-103. June, 1904	.25
	4. Basket Designs of the Indians of Northwestern California, by A. L. Kroeber. Pp. 105-164; plates 15-21. January, 1905	.75
	5. The Yokuts Language of South Central California, by A. L. Kroeber. Pp. 165-377. January, 1907	2.25
	Index, pp. 379-392.	
Vol. 3.	The Morphology of the Hupa Language, by Pliny Earle Goddard. 344 pp. June, 1905	3.50
Vol. 4.	1. The Earliest Historical Relations between Mexico and Japan, from original documents preserved in Spain and Japan, by Zelia Nuttall. Pp. 1-47. April,	.50

	1906	
	2. Contribution to the Physical Anthropology of California, based on collections in the Department of Anthropology of the University of California, and in the U. S. National Museum, by Ales Hrdlicka. Pp. 49-64, with 6 tables; plates 1-10, and map. June, 1906	.75
	3. The Shoshonean Dialects of California, by A. L. Kroeber. Pp. 65-166. February, 1907	1.50
	4. Indian Myths from South Central California, by A. L. Kroeber. Pp. 167-250. May, 1907	.75
	5. The Washo Language of East Central California and Nevada, by A. L. Kroeber. Pp. 251-318. September, 1907	.75
	6. The Religion of the Indians of California, by A. L. Kroeber. Pp. 319-356. September, 1907	.50
	Index, pp. 357-374.	
Vol. 5.	1. The Phonology of the Hupa Language; Part I, The Individual Sounds, by Pliny Earle Goddard. Pp. 1-20, plates 1-8. March, 1907	.35
	2. Navaho Myths, Prayers and Songs, with Texts and Translations, by Washington Matthews, edited by Pliny Earle Goddard. Pp. 21-63. September, 1907	.75
	3. Kato Texts, by Pliny Earle Goddard. Pp. 65-238, plate 9. December, 1909	2.50
	4. The Material Culture of the Klamath Lake and Modoc Indians of Northeastern California and Southern Oregon, by S. A. Barrett. Pp. 239-292, plates 10-25. June, 1910	.75
	5. The Chimariko Indians and Language, by Roland B. Dixon. Pp. 293-380. August, 1910	1.00
	Index, pp. 381-384.	
Vol. 6.	1. The Ethno-Geography of the Pomo and Neighboring Indians, by Samuel Alfred Barrett. Pp. 1-332, maps 1-2. February, 1908	3.25
	2. The Geography and Dialects of the Miwok Indians, by Samuel Alfred Barrett. Pp. 333-368, map 3.	
	3. On the Evidence of the Occupation of Certain Regions by the Miwok Indians, by A. L. Kroeber. Pp. 369-380. Nos. 2 and 3 in one cover. February, 1908	.50
	Index, pp. 381-400.	

UNIV. CALIF. PUBL. AM. ARCH. & ETHN. [BARRETT] PLATE 7



POMO BEAR DOCTOR'S SUIT
MODEL IN PEABODY MUSEUM

[Pg 443]

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PUBLICATIONS
IN
AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY AND ETHNOLOGY

Vol. 12, No. 11, pp. 443-465, plate 7July 11, 1917

POMO BEAR DOCTORS

BY
S. A. BARRETT

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

One of the most concrete and persistent convictions of the Indians of a large part of California is the belief in the existence of persons of magic power able to turn themselves into grizzly bears. Such shamans are called "bear doctors" by the English-speaking Indians and their American neighbors. The belief is obviously a locally colored variant of the widespread were-wolf superstition, which is not yet entirely foreign to the emotional life of civilized peoples. The California Indians had worked out their form of this concept very definitely. Thus Dr. Kroeber says:[1]

> A special class of shamans found to a greater or less extent among probably all the Central tribes, though they are wanting both in the Northwest and the South, are the so-called bear doctors, shamans who have received power from grizzly bears, often by being taken into the abode of these animals—which appear there in human form,—and who after their return to mankind possess many of the qualities of the grizzly bear, especially his apparent invulnerability to fatal attack. The bear shamans can not only assume the form of bears, as they do in order to inflict vengeance on their enemies, but it is believed that they can be killed an indefinite number of times when in this form and each time return to life. In some regions, as among the Pomo and Yuki, the bear shaman was not thought as elsewhere to actually become a bear, but to remain a man who clothed himself in the skin of a bear to his complete disguisement, and by his malevolence, rapidity, fierceness, and resistance to wounds to be capable of inflicting greater injury than a true bear. Whether any bear shamans actually attempted to disguise themselves in this way to accomplish their ends is doubtful. It is certain that all the members of some tribes believed it to be in their power.

Pomo beliefs differ rather fundamentally from those here summarized. In the first place, the Pomo appear to know nothing of the magician acquiring his power from the bears themselves. Since they ascribe no guardian spirit to him, he is scarcely a shaman in the strict sense of the word. The current term “doctor,” misleading as it may seem at first sight, may therefore be conveniently retained as free from the erroneous connotation that “shaman” would involve.

In the second place, the power of the doctor was thought to reside wholly in his bearskin suit, or parts thereof, and apparently was considered the result of an elaborate ceremony performed in its manufacture and subsequent donning. This distinctly ritualistic side of the bear doctor’s practices removes him still more clearly from the class of the true shaman.

Thirdly, there is a detailed Pomo tradition of the origin of bear doctors. This story is cast in the mold of a myth; in fact, its initial portions may be taken from the current mythology of the tribe. Other parts are, however, remarkably unmythical and matter of fact. The resultant whole is therefore rather incongruous, and, in the form recorded, may have been somewhat influenced by the speculations of an individual. But the events which it describes agree so closely with the beliefs which the Pomo at large entertain concerning the practices of recent bear doctors that the question of the extent of the prevalence of the myth among the group is of less importance than the insight which the tale affords into the Pomo mind. Its many specific references make it a suitable introduction to the presentation of the other data secured.

These peculiarities render a comparison of Pomo bear-doctor beliefs with those of other Californian groups desirable, but the published data from elsewhere are unfortunately too fragmentary to make such a study profitable at present. It has only seemed feasible to append some comparisons with Yuki and Miwok beliefs.

It may be added that the statements which constitute the body of this paper are the statements of native informants cited as representative of their convictions, and not as the opinions of the author. The degree to which the reputed practices of bear doctors were actually practiced is far

from clear, as Dr. Kroeber has stated. Whether, however, they rest mainly, partly, or not at all on reality, they furnish interesting psychological material.

ORIGIN ACCOUNT

The following tradition was obtained in January, 1906, from an old Eastern Pomo man and his wife. The husband stated that he had himself been a bear doctor at one time in his life. In his later years he became a noted practitioner of ordinary Indian "medicine," and was much in demand as a "sucking doctor." His old wife proved a very valuable informant on Pomo mythology, and it was while relating myths that the subject of bear doctors was mentioned and the fact developed that her husband had practiced this craft when a younger man. The incident led to a full discussion of the entire matter with the couple, and resulted in the recording of the following material. This was given by the Indians more as a personal favor than for any other reason, and was communicated only after a pledge that their story would not be spread about as long as the two were still alive. Both are now deceased, as is also the interpreter who aided in recording the material, so that there is no reason for longer withholding this information. Out of deference to the relatives of the three, it seems best not to name them in these pages.

Besides the myth, these two old people furnished the greater part of the descriptive information given in the remainder of this paper, but additional data from other informants have been included. Unless otherwise stated, the Pomo terms are in the Eastern dialect.

> In the days before Indians were upon the earth, and when the birds and mammals were human, there was a large village at *danō xa*.[2] These people were[Pg 446] great hunters, pursuing their game with bows and arrows and spears. But chiefly they set snares in every direction about the village.
>
> They had caught many kinds of game, but finally found a large grizzly bear in one of the snares. They saw that his carcass would furnish a great feast, but they were confronted with the difficult problem of getting their prize to the village. Each of the birds tried unsuccessfully to carry the bear, first on his right shoulder and then on his left, in the following order: *tsai* (valley bluejay), *auaū* (crow), *īlil* (a species of hawk), *tīyal* (yellowhammer), *karats* (red-headed woodpecker), *sawalwal* (mountain bluejay), *bakaka* (pileated woodpecker), *kabanasiksik* (a large species of woodpecker), *cagak ba bīya* (a species of hawk), *kiya* (a species of hawk), *sīwa* (mountain robin), *tsitōtō* (robin redbreast), *tcūma tsīya* (grass bird), and *tīnītal*.
>
> Finally a very small bird, *tsina bitūt kaiya patsōrk*,[3] succeeded in carrying the bear. He first tied its front and hind feet with a heavy milkweed-fiber rope in such a manner as to enable him to sling the carcass over his shoulder with the body resting upon his hip. No one else had thought of any such method. The ingenuity of this bird, the smallest of them all, won success and enabled him to walk away easily with the heavy load. The others laughed uproariously and shouted their

approval of the feat, immediately naming him *būrakal-ba-kīdjon*,[4] literally grizzly-bear-you-carrier. Thus he carried the grizzly home to the village, and Bluejay, the captain, cut it up and divided the meat among all the people. As a reward for his service *būrakal-ba-kīdjon* was given the bearskin. This was a very valuable present, worth many thousands of beads.[5]

With this skin in his possession, *būrakal-ba-kīdjon* thought a great deal about the grizzly bear and became very envious of his powers of endurance, his ferocity, and his cunning. He forthwith began to study how he might make some use of the skin to acquire these powers. He needed an assistant, and finally took his brother into his confidence. The two paid a visit to *cō danō*, a high mountain east of the village. They then went down a very rugged cañon on the mountain-side and finally came to a precipice the bottom of which was inaccessible except by way of a large standing tree, the upper branches of which just touched its brink.

In a most secluded and sheltered spot at the foot of this precipice they dug a cavern called *yēlīmo*, or *būrakal yēlīmo*, which they screened with boughs so that it would be invisible even if a chance hunter came that way. They dug an entrance about two feet in diameter into the side of the bank for a distance of about six feet. This led slightly upward and into a good-sized chamber. The mouth of this entrance was so arranged as to appear as natural as possible. Some rocks were left to project and twigs were arranged to obscure it. As a further precaution against detection the brothers always walked upon rocks in order never to leave a footprint, in case any one became curious about their[Pg 447] movements. They even went so far as to have the rocks at the foot of the precipice, where they stepped from the branches of the tree, covered with leaves, which they were careful to adjust so as to obliterate the slightest vestige of their trail should any one succeed in tracking them to this point. In this cave they began the manufacture of a ceremonial outfit.

They went out from the village daily,[6] ostensibly to hunt, and they did, as a matter of fact, kill deer and other game, which they brought back to the village; but they never ate meat, nor did they have intercourse in any way with women. When asked why he was thus restricting himself, *būrakal-ba-kīdjon* evaded the truth by saying that he expected to gamble, and that he had a very powerful medicine which would yield him luck only with the most rigid observance of certain restrictions.

When they began this work of preparing the outfits, they also provided a large sack of beads with which to bribe to secrecy any one who might discover them.

The two worked thus in the cavern four months.

When the outfit for *būrakal-ba-kīdjon* was done, the latter emerged from the cavern and ran around its entrance eight times each way, first in a contra-clockwise and then in a clockwise direction. The two then prepared a level, elliptical area, about twenty by fifteen feet, smoothed like a dancing floor, where *būrakal-ba-kīdjon* might practice and become a proficient bear doctor.

Upon putting on the suit for the first time, the procedure was as follows: While seated in the dancing area, *būrakal-ba-kīdjon* took the bearskin in both hands and swung it over his right shoulder and then turned his head to the left. This was repeated four times in all. He next adjusted the skin carefully over a basketry head-frame and placed the latter securely upon his head. He next inserted his arms and legs within the suit and laced it up tightly in front, beginning at the lower part of the belly and lacing upward to the neck.

He then tried to rise and act like a bear. This he did four times, saying “ha” (strongly aspirated), and turning his head to the left after each trial. He finally arose on all fours and shook himself after the fashion of a bear, some of the hair falling out of the skin as he did so. He then jumped about and started off in each of the four cardinal directions in the following order: south, east, north, and west. Each time he ran only a short distance, returning to the practice area for a new start. Finally, the fifth time he started off, he went for about half a day’s journey up the rugged mountains to the east. He found that he could travel with great speed and perfect ease through thick brush and up steep mountain-sides. In fact, he could move anywhere with as much ease as though he were on a level, open valley.[7] On this journey he hunted for soft, sweet manzanita berries, finally returning to the practice ground after covering a great distance, perhaps a hundred miles, in this half day.

He repeated this ceremonial dressing and the race into the mountains for four days, returning each evening to the village and bringing the game he had[Pg 448] killed. Finally, on the fifth day, he again put on his ceremonial dress and went over to a creek, called *taaiaka*, situated a considerable distance northeast of his hiding place. Here he found a bear standing erect and eating manzanita berries. The bear attempted to escape, but *būrakal-ba-kīdjon* gave chase and by virtue of his supernatural power was able to tire and outdistance the bear, overtaking him at length and killing him with an elk-horn dagger, which was part of his outfit.

He returned and brought his brother, who tied the bear’s legs together, as had *būrakal-ba-kīdjon* when he won his name, and carried the carcass to the village, *būrakal-ba-kīdjon* meantime returning to the secret cavern.

The brother skinned the bear and told the captain to call all the people into the dance-house to receive their portions of the meat. On the following day a great feast was celebrated, every one joining and providing a share of acorn mush, pinole, bread, and other foods.

The two brothers then announced that they were again going out to hunt. Instead, they really went to this secluded spot and made a second bear doctor’s suit. This one was for the brother, who underwent the same training as his brother.

Finally the two brothers started out one day toward the north, going up to a creek called *gūhūl bidame*. Here they found a deer hunter coming down a chamise ridge. They hid until the hunter came within about fifteen paces of them. They then sprang out and attacked him, the elder of the two bear doctors taking the lead. This hunter was followed at a distance of perhaps a quarter of a mile by four

others, and when he saw the bears he made a great outcry to his comrades. After a short chase the bear doctors caught and killed him. They tore his body to pieces, just as bears would do, took his bow and arrows, and started off.

Meantime the other hunters, who were Wolves (*tsīhmeū*), hid and escaped the fate of their companion. After the bear doctors had departed, they gathered up the bones and whatever else they could find of the remains of the dead hunter and took them back to the village. The usual funeral and burning rites were held, and the whole village was in special mourning on account of the fact that the hunter had been killed by bears.

The bear doctors went back to their hiding place, disrobed, and returned to the village as quickly as possible, arriving shortly after the four Wolves had brought in the remains of their comrade. They ate their supper and retired almost immediately, though they heard the people wailing in another part of the village. Their own relatives, the Birds, were not wailing, for they were not directly concerned, since the different groups of people lived in different parts of the village and were quite distinct one from another. During the evening the captain, Bluejay, came in and told the brothers the news of the hunter's death, asking if they had heard anything of the manner of it. They replied: "No; we know nothing of it. We went hunting, but saw nothing at all today. We retired early and have heard nothing about it." Bluejay then said: "We must make up a collection of beads and give it to the dead man's relatives, so that they will not consider us unmindful of their sorrow and perhaps kill some one among us." The bear doctors agreed to this and commended the captain for his good counsel.

Accordingly, the next morning Bluejay addressed his people, saying: "Make a fire in the dance-house. Do not feel badly. Wake up early. That is what we must expect. We must all die like the deer. After the fire is made in the dance-house I will tell you what next to do." Every one gave the usual answer of approval, "O".

[Pg 449]

After the usual sweating and cold plunge by the men, the captain again spoke, calling their attention to the fate of their friend the day before and asking that every one contribute beads to be given as a death offering to the relatives of the deceased.[8]

Bluejay himself contributed about ten thousand beads, and others contributed various amounts, but the two bear doctors contributed about forty thousand beads. This very act made the other people somewhat suspicious that these two were concerned in some way with the death.

As was usual, under such circumstances, word was sent to the Wolf people that the Birds would come over two days hence with their gift. The Wolf captain accordingly told his people to go out and hunt, and to prepare a feast for the Bird people for the occasion. On the appointed day the beads were brought by the Bird people to the house in which the deceased hunter had formerly lived, the usual

ceremonial presentation of them to the mourners was performed, and the return feast by the Wolves was spread near by.

The next morning the two brothers again left the village, saying that they were going hunting. They went to their place of seclusion, donned their bear suits and again started out as bears. By this time they had established regular secret trails leading to their hiding place, and regular places on these trails where they rested and ate. These trails led off in the four cardinal directions, and when they put on their suits it was only necessary to say in what direction they wished to go and what they wished to do, and the suits would bear them thither by magic.

Upon this occasion they went eastward, and finally, in the late afternoon, met Wildcat (*dalōm*) carrying upon his back a very heavy load. They immediately attacked and killed him, but did not cut him to pieces as they had Wolf. It is a custom, even now, among bear doctors never to tear to pieces or cut up the body of a victim who is known to have in his possession valuable property. Hence they stabbed Wildcat only twice. When they looked into the burden basket which he had been carrying they found a good supply of food and a large number of beads of various kinds. They took only the bag of beads, which one of them secreted inside his suit. Upon reaching their place of seclusion they removed their suits and were soon back in the village. After supper they again retired early.

Now Wildcat had started off early one morning to visit friends in another village, saying that he would be absent only two nights. When at the end of four days he had not returned his relatives became anxious about him, and his brother and another man set out for the other village to ascertain whether he had been there or if something had befallen him on the way. They found that he had set out from the other village to return home on the day he had promised. Then they tracked him and found his dead body. They made a stretcher[9] and carried the body home.

They arrived at the village about mid-afternoon, and when about a half mile off they commenced the death wail, thus notifying the village of their[Pg 450] coming. The people came running out to meet them, and the first to arrive were the bear doctors, who immediately assisted in carrying the stretcher into the village. Every one wailed for the departed, but the two bear doctors were loudest in their lamentations. Also they contributed liberally, in fact, more than all the other people together, when the death offering was made up.

For sometime thereafter the bear doctors did not go out, but finally they did so, returning with four deer, which they gave to their captain to be divided among the people for a feast. This the captain did, after the usual sweat-bath, on the following morning.

The next day the two brothers left the village before daybreak, donned their bear suits and journeyed southward to the Mount Kanaktai region. They made the journey by way of the east shore of Clear Lake, Lower Lake, and on down to near the present site of Middletown. Here they found a hunting party setting deer snares.[10] One of these men was driving the deer up out of the cañon toward the

place where the snares had been set. He saw the bear doctors and called out to his comrades: “Look out for yourselves; there are two bears coming.” The hunters were up on the open, brushy mountain-side. Two of them ran down the hill to a tree, but the bear doctors reached it as soon as they, and, as they started to ascend, attacked and killed the two, taking their bows and arrows.

The other hunters then attacked the bear doctors, who fled northward, pursued by the hunters, whom they outdistanced. The bear doctors became tired and very thirsty, for they had drunk no water all day, so they ran up Mount Kanaktai to a small pond just southwest of its summit.[11]

The bear doctors first ran four times each way around the pond and then disrobed completely, even taking off their bead armor. Leaving their entire suits lying on the shore, they first swam and rested, and then hung their suits on some small trees near by.

Shortly two men appeared, who approached close to them. The bear doctors said: “Oh, you have come; well, let us eat.” The strangers came and seated themselves beside the bear doctors. They then had a good meal of seed-meal and meat.

The belts and strings of beads worn as armor inside the suit were piled up on the shore near by, and when the meal was finished the bear doctors gave all these beads to the two men, saying at the same time: “You must never tell any one, not even your brothers, mothers, or sisters, what you have seen and what we are doing.” They even told the two men who they were, where they lived, and all about their activities. The men looked closely at the bear suits hanging near by and then went their way. The bear doctors again put on their suits and returned to their hiding place, disrobed, and traveled home in the evening, retiring early as usual.

When the people heard of the killing of two more hunters by two bears, they suspected the brothers, and formulated a plan to spy on them. All were to go hunting and certain ones were to keep a close watch on these two, and see just where they went and what they did. They also discovered that the[Pg 451] skins of the two bears killed by the brothers were nowhere to be found in the village.

The captain called all the men to go on a deer hunt, and all set off westward about midday to build a deer fence and set snares around Tule Lake, for they knew that many deer were feeding in the tule marsh there. Nothing unusual happened that day, but after all had left the village early the next morning some children who were playing about the village saw the two brothers *būrakal-ba-kīdjon*, who had remained away from the hunt, giving illness as their excuse, start off toward the east. Some of the children stealthily followed them, while two others ran over to Tule Lake to warn the hunters. About midday the hunters saw two bears coming toward them. Several of the best hunters hid at an advantageous point in the very thick brush and tule, while the others continued their shouting and beating the bush to drive the deer into the snares in order that the bear doctors would not suspect the trap that had been set for them. The hunters had agreed to act as though they did not know that the bear doctors were near, but to shout if they

were seen, “Two brother deer are coming!” thus giving the hidden hunters notice of the approach of the bears. If deer only were seen, they were to shout, “The deer are coming!”

Finally, one of the hunters on the east side of the lake saw the bears and shouted, “Look out there; two brother deer are coming down the hill!” There were two trees standing some distance apart with a thick, brushy place on each side. One hunter hid behind each tree. A third hunter stood very close to a near-by opening in the deer fence and in plain sight of the bear doctors, who immediately made after him. At each jump of the bear doctors the water in their baskets rattled and made a great noise. The hunter was but a few feet from these trees when the bears came close to him, so he dodged between the trees and the bears followed.

Immediately the two hunters behind the trees attacked the bears from the rear with their clubs and jerked the masks from their heads. The other hunters came up armed with clubs, bows and arrows, and stones, and found the bear doctors standing very shame-facedly before their captors.[12]

Every one shouted: “These are the two we suspected; we have them now.” Some wanted to kill them immediately with clubs, others wanted to burn them alive, but the captain restrained them and insisted upon first questioning the bear doctors. They finally confessed to the murders, and took the hunters to their hiding place. Here they exposed their entire secret and told all the details of their work: how they dug the cavern, how they made the ceremonial outfits, and how they killed people. The hunters then stripped the bear doctors and took them, together with all their paraphernalia, and the property they had stolen, back to the village, placed them in their own house, tied them securely, and set fire to the house. Thus ended the bear doctors. That is how the knowledge of this magic was acquired. It has been handed down to us by the teaching of these secrets to novices by the older bear doctors ever since.[13]

ACQUISITION OF POWER

Even as late as the closing years of the nineteenth century many of the Pomo were convinced that bear doctors were still active; this in spite of the fact that the whites had at that time long possessed complete control of the entire region, and had succeeded, purposely or otherwise, in suppressing most of the aboriginal practices of the Indians. Evidently the belief was a deeply rooted one in the native mind. On the other hand, since the nefariousness of the alleged practices would cause them to be carefully concealed, there are now some Pomo skeptics who maintain that bear doctors never existed.

Both men and women of middle or old age could become bear doctors, the same name[14] being applied to both. In fact, it is said that women sometimes made very successful bear doctors; even a woman so old and feeble that she could hardly walk would acquire great powers of endurance and swiftness through this magic.

It is said that a bear doctor always learned from an old person who was or had been one. The training for both men and women was precisely the same and they were on a par in every way. A female bear doctor could not operate during her menstrual period, but a male bear doctor was similarly restricted by the menstrual periods of both his wife and his female assistant or the other female members of his household. He was even prohibited from going near his bear hiding-place during his wife’s menstruation. The periods of other members of his household also restricted him.[15]

No specific fee was paid for instruction in bear-doctoring, but the instructor was given a large share, usually one-half, of the spoils obtained by the new doctor in his murders. Also he could command the assistance and protection of his pupil, who must stand ready, if necessary, to lay down his life for his instructor. Each bear doctor selected some friend to whom he willed his entire outfit and whom he instructed fully in its use. Upon his death this protegé took possession of the paraphernalia and the hiding place of his friend and used them as he saw fit.

A bear doctor might “catch” a man who was out in some lonely spot, particularly a solitary hunter, take him to his hiding place, and teach him his secrets.[16] Particularly was this the case if the bear doctor happened to be a man possessed of few friends, since it was thought necessary for him to will his paraphernalia to some one. Stories are told of specific instances in which persons have been thus made captive and instructed. Thus:

> An old she-bear caught a young hunter from a village in the Santa Rosa Valley. She first jumped out upon him from her hiding place and frightened him badly. She rolled him about on the ground and made as if to kill him. Though greatly frightened, the boy made no outcry, but watched her closely. Finally she sat astride him for quite a long time and the boy ceased to be alarmed. She then led him away over the long journey to her hiding place on a high, rocky peak east of Santa Rosa. On the way they heard, late in the afternoon, the people down in the valley calling his name as they searched everywhere for him.
>
> Finally they arrived at the bear’s cave in the rocks, where she had a bed of moss and leaves just as a bear usually does in its den. In the early part of the evening the boy became homesick and fearful of his fate and began to cry. It was then that the bear doctor revealed herself. She removed her suit, showing her human form, and said to him: “I did not catch you to kill you. I desire only to show you how we become bear doctors and instruct you in our magic. Only human beings live in this section of the mountains. In the morning I shall place my bearskin suit upon you and you shall practice bear-doctoring.” This did not, however, reassure and comfort the boy, and he continued to sob and weep during the greater part of the night, despite the repeated assurances of the bear doctor that she would not harm him, but was, on the other hand, just like an elder sister to him and wished to

teach him powerful magic. She finally prepared a good meal for him and he forgot his fright and, temporarily, his own people.

During the night she taught him her songs, and at daybreak began to instruct him in the ritual of donning the suit. This, of course, required that he should completely strip himself. At first he was much ashamed, but the bear doctor told him that he must not be, any more than if he were only exposing his nose.

About midday, this part of the instruction being finished, she put her own suit on him and gave him his first practice. She told him to first jump four times along the ground and then jump up and try to catch a high limb of a near-by tree, trying repeatedly until he could catch the limb. Then he would be able to do anything that she could.

She then stepped back, looked him over, and smiled at him. This made him conscious and he hung his head and did not move until she commanded him to jump. At first he jumped only short distances, but he continued his practice for four days, each day donning the suit with the elaborately regulated ritual, and finding, each day, that he could jump a little farther and a little higher than on the previous one. At last he succeeded in reaching the limb and in jumping down at one jump and back to the starting point in four more.

His tutor rejoiced at his success, and said: “Now you will succeed in every[Pg 454] way and enjoy good luck, secure plenty of beads and other goods, be able to travel far and possess great endurance.”

She then gave him a complete outfit and told him that he would thereafter procure an easy living and wealth if he would use it and observe the secret rites she had taught him. She, herself, had acquired great quantities of property—beads, food, and other commodities—which she stored in her hiding place.

A bear doctor was not permitted to kill more than four people in one year, upon penalty of the loss of his magic power and consequent capture upon his attempt to kill the fifth.

ASSISTANTS

A bear doctor must always be assisted by some one. He usually hired some female relative who could be trusted to secrecy. She wove for him the water baskets which formed part of his costume and cooked for him the special food which he must eat while operating as a bear doctor. She must observe the same restrictions as the bear doctor himself, abstaining from meat or foods containing blood in any form, and also from sexual intercourse. The evil consequences of a violation of these restrictions did not befall her, but the bear doctor himself was sure to be killed in combat or captured, which meant certain death at the hands of an outraged populace.

This assistant was never the bear doctor’s wife, but the wife, if he had one, must remain abed in the morning until the sun was high and the bear doctor was well on his way from his hiding place. She might then rise and go about her daily routine as usual. If he had no wife, his female assistant must observe this restriction for him.

In making a suit, it was necessary for a bear doctor to have an assistant who not only helped in the actual construction of the suit but also sang the long series of songs required during the ceremony when the suit was first put on.

HIDING PLACES

Since custom prescribed that every person leaving a village told where he was going and the purpose of his mission, it was difficult for a bear doctor to get away, undetected, for the pursuit of his nefarious practices. All his preparations must, therefore, be made in perfect secrecy. Very frequently he gave as an excuse for his absence that he intended to go in search of manzanita berries or hunting in some distant locality, sometimes announcing a stay of several days. Since he was forbidden to partake of food or water on the morning of the[Pg 455] day he wore the bear costume, he usually ate and drank heartily the night before, and repaired to his hiding place before daybreak. To lend color to his excuses, he usually brought home some game or berries. As a rule these were not handled at all while wearing the bear suit, although apparently it was believed that no penalty was attached to doing so.

Whenever possible a bear doctor found some natural cave or secluded spot in a deep cañon, or in the most rugged mountains. If necessary, he dug a cavern, as related in the foregoing myth, taking care to scatter the fresh earth about in such a manner that it would not be detected. Such a place of seclusion was called *yēlīmo*, *būrakal yēlīmo*, or *kabē ga*.

Near by a level “practice” ground, called *cīyō xe gai*, literally “bear dance place,” was prepared, where, the weather permitting, the bear doctor performed the ceremonies connected with donning his suit. In bad weather these rites were performed in the sheltered cavern. This practice ground was simply a level place in the bottom of a cañon near the cavern. It was an elliptical clearing about twenty feet long by ten to fifteen feet wide. No trail led to it, the bear doctor and his assistant exercising the greatest care to obscure as much as possible every evidence of their movements, not even a broken twig being left about as a clue.

THE MAGIC SUIT

The suit of the bear doctor, called *gawī*, was made as follows: First, an openwork basket was woven of white oak twigs to fit the head and with openings for eyes, nose, and mouth. Disks of abalone shell with small openings to permit actual vision were fitted into the eye openings in the

basket. This basket served as a foundation over which to place the skin of the bear's head. It was made so that it exactly fitted the wearer's head and remained in place even when he moved violently. The covering of this helmet, as also the outer covering for the rest of the body, was usually made of real grizzly bear skin, though a net covered with soaproot fiber was sometimes used. The skin of the bear's head was shaped, but not stuffed, so as to retain its proper form, the eye-holes of the skin being made to fit the shell-filled eye-holes in the basket. The remainder of the bearskin was fitted exactly to the body, arms, and legs so as to perfectly hide every part of the body and give the wearer the appearance of a grizzly.

When soaproot fiber was used in making the bear doctor's suit, a[Pg 456] fine net was first woven and thickly covered with shredded soaproot fiber (*ap tsida*). This was woven entirely in one piece and so arranged as to completely cover the wearer from head to foot, including the basketry helmet just mentioned. It laced in front.

A low shoe, with the sole rounded and shaped somewhat like that of a bear's foot, was worn. This shoe was made of woven basketry held between two hoops and so arranged that the foot went between the two sections, which were attached directly to the costume. It was said that sometimes, also, similarly shaped shoes were placed upon the hands. At other times nothing was worn on either hands or feet.

Before donning the suit an "armor" of shell beads was put on. Four belts covered the abdomen. Each was about six inches wide and made of a different size and form of beads. One, called *hmūkī*, covered the umbilicus. The other three, which were placed one above the other, completely covered the remainder of the abdomen, chest, and back up to the armpits, and were called respectively *kibūkal*, *catanī kūtsa*, and *tadatada*. The last protected the heart, and was made of very large, discoidal beads. Ordinarily these bead belts were woven in the usual way. Sometimes, however, one or more of the four was covered without by a layer of woodpecker scalps. Strings of shell beads were wound closely about the arms from wrist to shoulder and the legs were similarly covered. All these beads served as a protection against arrows in case the bear doctor was attacked by hunters.

A type of body armor, made of wooden rods and used in open warfare, is said to have been sometimes used by bear doctors. This consisted of two layers of rods obtained from the snowdrop bush (*bakol*), each rod being about the size of a lead pencil. These were bound together with string, one layer of rods being placed vertically and the other horizontally, in such a manner as to make a very close and effective armor.

Two globose, three-rod foundation baskets, called *kūtc tcadōtcadoī*, and each about three inches in diameter, were half filled with water and each encased tightly in a closely woven fabric made of milkweed fiber cord, or in a casing of rawhide. One was then tied, inside the bearskin suit, just under each jaw or under each armpit. In the soaproot fiber suit, small pockets were woven on its inner surface for their reception. The swashing of the water made a sound (pluk, pluk, pluk, pluk) resembling that of the viscera of a bear as he moves along. Sometimes, instead of these baskets, a slightly larger pair of plain-twining were tied one at each side at the waist. The doctor never[Pg 457] wore more than one pair at a time and never wore a single basket alone. Canoe-form baskets ten or twelve inches long and with unusually small openings were sometimes carried in place of the small, globose baskets above mentioned. They were sometimes

filled with water, as were the small baskets, and at other times were used as receptacles for beads, berries, or other commodities.

Plate 7 (frontispiece) shows a Pomo bear doctor suit, in the Peabody Museum of Harvard University, reproduced by courtesy of Mr. C. C. Willoughby. This is a model. While differing in some details from the explanations received from informants, it confirms them in substance.

WEAPONS AND THEIR USE

A bear doctor usually carried one and sometimes two elk-horn daggers, called *bōō a*, literally "elk horn." Such a dagger was from six to ten inches in length and was made by pounding at its base and breaking off the large end point of an elk antler and sharpening its tip. It was rubbed on a grinding stone and smoothed throughout its length and a hole was bored in its base through which a loop about two feet long was passed for suspending it about the neck or from the belt. This loop was always of string, as this is not affected by dampness.

Obsidian or flint knives, called *bat!*, were sometimes used in addition to or in place of the elk-horn dagger. The blade of such a knife was made by first striking the larger flakes from it with a hammer stone and then chipping its edges with an antler chipping tool. This blade was set into a split oak handle and bound securely with string, but was not pitched. Both of these were thrusting weapons.

Other weapons were sometimes used, even the stone pestle being employed as a weapon.

Bear doctors often operated in pairs, and sometimes in greater numbers. They frequently deployed so as to cover a considerable area in their hunt, and had a method of intercommunication. If a prospective victim was sighted at some distance, the bear doctor stood erect on the top of the nearest ridge, with his back turned directly toward him. This signal brought the other bear doctors into positions to surround the victim. Informants maintain that in the actual attack a bear doctor frequently stood unconcernedly, near the path of his victim, and with his back toward him until he was quite near. He then whirled and attacked suddenly. They stated that this was also the method of attack of a real bear.

[Pg 458]

It is said that the only way to overcome a bear doctor was to seize his head or shoulders and jerk off his helmet. This completely removed his magic power. The story is told that Kamachi, a very brave and powerful man formerly living at the Yorkville Rancheria, mistook two real bears for bear doctors, attacked them in this manner, and finally succeeded in killing them.

RITES OVER THE SUIT

When the suit was put on for the first time by the bear doctor, the following elaborate ceremony was performed. The assistant took up his position in the center of the practice ground, having on one side of him four hundred counting sticks, each about the size of a lead pencil, nicely arranged in even rows. Directly in front of him was the entire bear doctor's suit, except the beads and bead belts; that is, the basketry helmet, the bearskin garment, the two water baskets, the dagger of elk antler, and the obsidian knife. These were the articles which were strictly ceremonial, and which must never be handled by women or children for the reason that they were the property of the particular supernatural beings under whose patronage the bear doctor operated and whose powers were invoked for his success, especially by means of a long series of ritualistic songs sung by his assistant during the ceremony of donning the suit, now to be described.

While the assistant sang the ritualistic songs, the bear doctor who was to wear the suit danced up toward it four times each from each of the four cardinal points in the following order: north, west, south, and east. Each time the dancer advanced toward the suit, the singer raised above his head one counter from the one side and as the dancer receded placed it on his opposite side. Thus this portion of the ceremony took sixteen counters. Having thus approached the suit four times the sacred number four, the dancer picked up with his left hand the basketry helmet and danced with it four times around the practice ground, the singer keeping tally with the necessary four sticks. He then danced four times up toward and back from the place on the practice ground where he intended to temporarily place this object, so using another four counters. Thus there were used in all with this one object twenty-four counters.

He did precisely the same with each of the remaining five articles of the suit. Thus one hundred and forty-four counters were transferred from the original group to the singer's opposite side.

[Pg 459]

He next took all six of these articles in both hands and performed the same cycle of twenty-four dance movements that was employed in handling each separately, so using one hundred and sixty-eight counters up to this point.

He then repeated this entire cycle of one hundred and sixty-eight dance movements in precisely the same order and manner as just described, but using the right hand instead of the left, thus using three hundred and thirty-six counters up to this point.

He next repeated all the foregoing movements exactly in reverse order in every respect; taking up the articles in reverse order and dancing toward the cardinal points in reverse order and using the hands in reverse order, thus using six hundred and seventy-two counters up to this point.

He finally took the entire suit in both hands and went around the practice ground four times in a clockwise direction and then four times in a contra-clockwise direction, thus using in all six hundred and eighty counters, indicative of that number of separate movements, or rather one hundred and seventy distinct types of movements each repeated four times.

Throughout this entire ceremony the assistant sang ritualistic songs invoking, in the ascending order of their importance, the aid of the particular supernatural beings under whose patronage the bear doctor was supposed to be and with whom he came into direct contact. According to one informant, these were, in order, brush-man, rock-man, shade-man, spring-man, pond-man,

mountain-man, and sun-man, though a large number of others are also included.[17] In fact, it seems probable that all the spirits of the Pomo world are supposed to be directly concerned. The following were specifically mentioned by the informants:

English	***Eastern Dialect***	***Central Dialect***
Mountain-man	danō gak	danō baiya
Water-man	xa gak	ka baiya
Night-man	dūwē gak	īwē baiya
Valley-man	gagō gak	kakō baiya
Brush-man	se gak	see baiya
Rock-man	xabē gak	kabē baiya
Spring-man	gapa gak	gapa baiya
Shade-man	cīyō gak	
Fire-man	xō gak	hō baiya[Pg 460]
Disease-man	gak kalal	ītal baiya
Insanity-man	gak dagōl	dakōl baiya
gūksū	gūksū	kūksū
Whitled-leg widow	kama sīlī dūket mīya	cakū kattciū
Dream-man	marū	marū
Wind-man	yai kī	ya tcatc
Pond-woman	danō kawō	
Blind-man	ūī bagō	ūī nasai
Sun-man	da tca	
Sun-woman	da mata	
Deer-man	bice gaūk	pce tca

To all these he sang songs and made prayers the substance of which usually was: “You know what I am doing. I am doing as you do and using your ways. You must help me and give me good luck.”

He sang to and invoked particularly Sun-man because he was an all-seeing deity and knew everything that happened all over the earth, and more particularly because as Sun-man rises with the sun each morning he comes with his bow and arrow drawn and ready to shoot on sight any wrongdoer. Unless, therefore, Sun-man was propitiated and previously informed of the bear doctor’s intentions, he was likely to shoot him just as the sun appeared above the horizon. The substance of his prayer to Sun-man was: “I am going to do as you do. I shall kill people. You must give me good luck.”

When the suit was finally put on there was a certain amount of ceremonial procedure. The beads used as armor were first put on the naked body. The arms and legs were closely wound, each with a single long string of beads. The bear doctor then danced around the practice ground four times in a clockwise direction and then four times in a contra-clockwise direction. He next advanced toward and receded from the suit four times each from the north, west, south, and east.

He then made four times a motion as if to pick up the suit, and again four times the motion of putting the suit on, after which he donned it and was completely ready for his journey, being endowed with all the supernatural powers of the bear doctor.

Throughout the entire construction of the suit, and also throughout the ceremony connected with putting it on, he turned his head around toward the left after each separate action, such as lifting up or putting down any article and after each dancing up and back toward the suit, or running around the practice ground.

Each subsequent donning of the suit was quite simple. The bear[Pg 461] doctor picked up each article separately and made a motion with it four times toward the part of the body it was to cover, turning his head four times to the left after each of these sets of four motions. He then put on the suit and danced in a contra-clockwise direction four times around the practice area or the interior of his cavern, as the case might be, after which he was fully ready for his journey.

In case of inclement weather the bear doctor dressed in the shelter of the cavern, but if the weather was fair this was always done on the practice ground.

In undressing, on the other hand, the bear doctor performed no ceremony at all, but simply took off his suit and carefully laid it away, hanging up in the cavern the bearskin itself to keep it clean. It was necessary that a bear doctor swim immediately upon removing his suit. Still dressed in his bead armor, he went, therefore, to his swimming place, removing the beads and piling them on the bank. This was done so that if discovered he had immediately at hand a treasure with which to buy secrecy. The penalty paid by an informer who had been thus bribed was certain death at the hands of the bear doctor. Upon emerging from the pool, he returned to his cavern, carefully folded the belts and strings of beads and laid each away separately until the suit was again needed.

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN BEAR DOCTORS

Informants state that the various bear doctors all over the country knew each other.[18] Two or more of them often met by chance at some spring or other secluded spot in the mountains, and at such times discussed their activities. They might tell each other where they expected to be next month, or what mountain they would use as a hiding place and base of operations next year.

Each bear doctor acted independently and knew no restrictions of any sort so far as his fellows were concerned, nor had he or his relatives any immunity from the attacks of other bear doctors, for one bear doctor might become enraged at another and cause his death or that of some of his relatives.

The only persons who were immune from these attacks were the captain of the village and his immediate family. He knew all the bear doctors and received a share of their spoils in consideration for his friendly protection.

[Pg 462]

Any bear doctor or person who knew all the secrets of bear doctoring usually took his relatives, or, at any rate, certain of them, to this hiding place and showed them enough of his secrets so that they would lose their fear of bear doctors and not be frightened when they heard of the death of some one through an attack by bears. Such partially initiated persons always mourned the loss of the victim as did the rest of the people, but were not, in reality, afraid of the bear doctors.

PANTHER DOCTORS

While the bear doctor was the most important of magicians, there were also mountain lion or panther doctors, who were also possessed of considerable power. Very little was learned of this class of medicine man save that the head part of their suits was made of the head and neck of an actual panther skin drawn over a basket frame similar to that used by the bear doctor. The remainder of the suit was made of shredded soaproot fiber woven on to a fine net, which was said to simulate quite well the skin of the panther.

The panther doctor wore no bead armor as did the bear doctor, but wore a necklace of small and finely made shell beads around his neck. He always carried a bag filled with valuable beads with which to bribe to silence any one who might discover him. The bear doctor used the beads comprising his armor for this purpose.

COMPARISON WITH YUKI BELIEFS

The ideas that the doctor is actually transformed into a bear, that bear hair grows out through his skin, and that he comes to life after having been killed—ideas found among certain California Indians[19]—have not been discovered among the Pomo.

As might be expected, from the contiguity of the two groups and their numerous cultural identities, the Pomo and Yuki[20] bear doctors are very similar. The Yuki, however, have certain beliefs that the Pomo do not possess.

The Yuki bear doctor began by repeatedly dreaming of bears and was taken out and instructed by actual bears, thus placing the bear in the position of a true guardian spirit, and making the doctor a real[Pg 463] shaman. Later he was thought to be instructed and to have his powers developed by older shamans. The Pomo have no such notions.

The Yuki bear doctor was not always an evildoer, but in some measure an accepted benefactor, particularly in curing bear bites and in avenging wrongs to his community. His capacity thus was publicly recognized—a fact that is further evidenced by his performance of sleight-of-hand tricks. The Pomo bear doctor never performed any cure, practiced his magic with the greatest

secrecy and only for his own satisfaction and aggrandizement, and had death awaiting him at the hands of his own people if he was unfortunate enough to be discovered.

The Yuki bear doctor carried a basket containing a stone which rumbled in imitation of the bear's growl as the shaman shook his head. Analogous to this was the Pomo bear doctor's set of water-filled baskets which swashed like a real bear's viscera as he ran.

Both carried beads; but the Yuki to secure appropriate burial if killed, the Pomo as an armor and to bribe to secrecy him who might discover him.

The mode of attack and the dismemberment of the victim were quite similar in both tribes.

COMPARISON WITH MIWOK BELIEFS

The Northern Sierra and Plains Miwok called bear doctors *sulik müko*. These shamans donned bearskins, but, like their Yuki colleagues, had bears as spirits and exhibited their powers publicly. Like the Yokuts bear doctors, they were thought able to transform themselves bodily into bears.

The Miwok relate how a man was hunting in the chaparral south of the Stanislaus when a bear appeared and asked what he was doing. The Indian replied that he was seeking an arrow lost in a shot at a red-headed woodpecker. The bear led him into its cave, kept and taught him for four days, and sent him home with several bears as guides. A white man, married to an Indian woman, instigated the building of a dance-house to give the bear doctor an opportunity to show his alleged powers. The latter accepted, came, walked into the fire, pushed aside the flaming brands and made himself a bed in the coals, arose after a time unharmed, swam, and resumed his human form.

The Miwok panther doctor was similarly met and instructed by a[Pg 464] panther. He wore no skin and possessed no power of transformation. He did, however, acquire the panther's ability to hunt, it was thought. In extreme old age he revealed his experiences and then died at once.

It is clear that the Miwok panther doctor is merely a shaman who has that animal as his personal guardian spirit, and that except for his power of transformation and the character of his guardian, the Miwok bear doctor does not essentially differ from an ordinary shaman.

It seems therefore that the institution of the bear doctor has attained its most extreme form among the Pomo.

SUMMARY

1. The origin of bear doctors is assigned by the Pomo to the mythical times before men existed, when birds and mammals possessed human attributes. The first bear doctors arose from a relatively insignificant incident, which led one of the smallest of the birds to develop his magic powers.

2. These powers are believed to be now acquired through the wearing of a special suit which endows its wearer with rapidity of motion and great endurance, but which does not itself actually transport him or perform any act.

3. The powers are received through elaborate ritualistic songs and prayers to certain supernatural beings under whose patronage the doctor operates. These songs are largely sung not by the doctor himself but by an assistant while the doctor performs an elaborate dance with the various parts of the costume preparatory to actually putting them on for the first time.

4. In addition to this constant assistant, the bear doctor must have a female aide, who makes certain parts of his paraphernalia and cooks his special food. He is subject to certain restrictions connected with the menstrual periods of this female aide and his wife, and they, in turn, are subject through him to certain other restrictions.

5. Although all-powerful under ordinary circumstances, a bear doctor apparently loses all his magic power as soon as he is captured.

6. Bear doctors are all known one to another, but form no organized group or society. They are also usually known to the chief, to whom they pay tribute and give guarantee of immunity from attack in return for his connivance and protection.

[Pg 465]

7. In exceptional cases the bear doctors are harmless, but in the main their object is to kill and plunder, and they carry special weapons for this purpose. They do not practice curative medicine in any form.

8. There are apparently other kinds of magicians similar to bear doctors. One of these, the “panther doctors,” has been specifically mentioned.

These statements reflect the opinions of the Pomo. Some of the practices described by them could easily have had a basis in fact. Whether and to what extent they were actually performed remains to be ascertained.

Transmitted November 28, 1916.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] A. L. Kroeber, “Religion of the Indians of California,” present series, IV, 331, 1907.

[2] This is the site of an old Eastern Pomo village and is situated in the foot-hills about two miles northeast of the town of Upper Lake. It is located on the western slope of a hill and overlooks the lake.

[3] Identity unknown, and common Indian name not recorded.

[4] This name in the Northern dialect is *būta baōm*, and in the Central dialect is *bitaka yalō djak*, literally grizzly bear between the legs flew. The Northern people say that the name of the bird previous to the accomplishment of this feat was *mābasōmsō*. In speaking of this bird one Northern informant stated that when the first people were transformed into birds this man was wearing a very large head-dress. This accounts for the fact that the bird now carries a large topknot.

[5] In very early times it is said that a string of four hundred beads was worth an amount about equal to two and one-half dollars. Later, after the introduction of the pump-drill, this value dropped to one dollar. On the basis of modern valuations of such skins, and under the higher rating of beads, this hide would have been worth 12,000 beads.

[6] In giving the account the informant stated that while making their ceremonial attire the two worked entirely at night, as was always done by Indian bear doctors later, and then only upon perfectly dark nights, when the moon was not shining or when it was obscured by clouds. In case the moon suddenly emerged from behind a cloud they immediately ceased their work. This was made necessary by the fact that many hunters were abroad at night.

[7] Another informant told of a marvelous journey said to have been made by his grandmother while the family resided many years ago in Eight-mile Valley. She went during one night to Healdsburg, Sebastopol, Bodega Bay, and Big River, thence returning to her home, covering in those few hours about two hundred miles.

[8] The bringing of beads as a death offering from one village to another, or from one political group of people to another, is called *kal kubek*, while such an offering taken to the home of the family of the deceased by relatives in the same village is called *kal banek*.

[9] This stretcher is called *kaitsak*, and consists of two side poles with short cross-pieces bound to them in such a manner as to resemble a ladder. It was used in early times for carrying the wounded or the dead back to the village. A corpse was bound to it by a binding of grapevine and the two ends of the stretcher rested upon the shoulders of the bearers.

[10] They were making a *bīcē gō*; i.e., setting snares in the brush without making a brush fence. The fence with snares is called *bīcē warī*.

[11] This pond, which is said to furnish the only water on this great mountain, was called *ka kapa*, and is said to be one of a very few ponds apparently without a spring, and called *ka dabō*, which are supposed to have been made in prehistoric times by bears as resting places for themselves. This pond is nowadays almost never visited by any one except hunters who have lost their way.

[12] This loss of magic power and their consequent capture was explained as a supernatural penalty for their attempt to kill more than four victims in any one year.

[13] One informant ascribed the source of Pomo bear doctor knowledge to the Lake Miwok, to the south. This opinion, of course, conflicts with the preceding origin tale.

[14] The bear doctor was known to the Pomo as *gauk būrakal*, “human bear.” *Būrakal* specifically denotes the grizzly bear. The brown or cinnamon bear is *līma*, but black individuals, which we reckon as of the same species, were called *cīyō būrakal*, “black grizzly bears,” by the Pomo.

[15] It would appear that restriction depended rather upon co-residence than blood kinship. The extent to which the taboo might accordingly affect a bear doctor’s activities will be realized when we reflect that it was customary for several related families to reside in one house, each family having its own door and each two families a separate fire. In the center of the house was the common baking pit.

[16] Usually, however, a person caught in this way was used as a “head rest” and servant, it is said, and received no instruction whatever.

[17] Another informant gave as these chief spirits sun-man, mountain-man, wind-man, night-man, water-man, and valley-man, though not stating that they were considered in this order.

[18] So far as could be ascertained, they formed no organized society, and never met as a body.

[19] Kroeber, *loc. cit.*

[20] This comparison is based on manuscript data of Dr. Kroeber concerning the Yuki.

Transcriber's notes:

The following is a list of changes made to the original. The first line is the original line, the second the corrected one.

to his excuses, he uusally brought home some game or berries.
to his excuses, he usually brought home some game or berries.

This conisted of two layers of rods obtained from the snowdrop
This consisted of two layers of rods obtained from the snowdrop

from the original group to the singers opposite side.
from the original group to the singer’s opposite side.